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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

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IN all my reſearches into the human heart (the ſtudy of which has taken up my principal attention for theſe forty years paſt) I have never been ſo confounded and perplexed as at diſcovering that while people are indulging themſelves openly and without diſguiſe in the commiſſion of almoſt every vice that their natures encline them to, they ſhould deſire to conceal their virtues, as if they were really aſhamed of them, and conſidered them as ſo many weakneſſes in their conſtitutions. I know a man at this very hour, who is in his heart the moſt domeſtic creature living, and whoſe wife and children are the only delight of his life, yet who for fear of being

being laughed at by his acquaintance, and to get a reputation in the world, is doing penance every evening at the tavern, and perpetually hinting to his companions that he has a miſtreſs in private. I am acquainted with another, who being over-heard upon a ſick bed to recommend himſelf to the care of Heaven in a ſhort ejaculation, was ſo aſhamed at being told of it, that he pleaded lightheadedneſs for his excuſe, proteſting that he could not poſſibly have been in his right ſenſes, and guilty of ſuch a weakneſs. I know alſo a third, who from a ſerious turn of mind, goes to church every ſunday in a part of the town where he is totally unknown, that he may recommend himſelf to his acquaintance by laughing at public worſhip, and ridiculing the parſons.

THERE are men who are ſo fond of the reputation of an intrigue with a handſome married woman, that without the leaſt paſſion for the object of their purſuit, or perhaps the ability to gratify it if they had, are toaſting her in all companies, purſuing her to every public place, and eternally buzzing in her ear, to convince the world that they are in poſſeſſion of a happineſs, which if offered to them, would only end in their diſappointment and diſgrace. And what is ſtill more unaccountable, the lady, thus purſued, who poſſibly prefers her huſband to all other men, ſhall countenance by her behaviour the ſuſpicions entertained of her; and contenting herſelf with the ſecret conſciouſneſs of her innocence, ſhall take pains to be thought infamous by the whole town.

THAT there are perſons of a different ſtamp from theſe, I very readily allow; perſons who determine to pay themſelves by pleaſure for the ſcandal they have occaſioned. But it is really my opinion, that if the maſk

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were taken off, we ſhould find more virtues and fewer vices to exiſt amongſt us, than are commonly imagined by thoſe who judge only from appearances.

A VERY ingenious French writer, ſpeaking of the force of cuſtom and example, makes the following remarks upon his own countrymen.

"A MAN, ſays he, of good ſenſe and good nature "ſpeaks ill of the abſent, becauſe he would not be "deſpiſed by thoſe who are preſent. Another would "be honeſt, humane, and without pride, if he was "not afraid of being ridiculous: and a third becomes "really ridiculous, through ſuch qualities as would "make him a model of perfection, if he dared to exert "them, and aſſume his juſt merits. In a word, con-"tinues he, our vices are artificial as well as our virtues, "and the frivolouſneſs of our characters permits us to "be but imperfectly what we are. Like the play-things "we give our children, we are only a faint reſemblance "of what we would appear. Accordingly we are "eſteemed by other nations only as the petty toys and "trifles of ſociety. The firſt law of our politeneſs re-"gards the women. A man of the higheſt rank owes "the utmoſt complaiſance to a woman of the very low-"eſt condition, and would bluſh for ſhame, and think "himſelf ridiculous in the higheſt degree, if he offered "her any perſonal inſult. And yet ſuch a man may "deceive and betray a woman of merit, and blacken "her reputation, without the leaſt apprehenſion either "of blame or puniſhment."

I HAVE quoted theſe remarks that I might do juſtice to the candour of the Frenchman who wrote them, and at the ſame time vindicate my countrymen (unaccountable as they are) from the unjuſt imputation of being more ridiculous and abſurd than the reſt of mankind.

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In France every married woman of condition intrigues openly; and it is thought the higheſt breach of French politeneſs for the huſband to interfere in any of her pleaſures. A man may be called to an account for having ſeduced his friend's ſiſter or daughter, becauſe it may be preſumed he has carried his point by a promiſe of marriage; but with a married woman the caſe is quite different, as her gallant can only have applied to her inclinations, or gratified the longings of a lady, whom it had been infamy to have refuſed.

There is a ſtory of a Frenchman, which as I have only heard once, and the majority of my readers perhaps never, I ſhall beg leave to relate. A banker at Paris, who had a very handſome wife, invited an Engliſh gentleman, with whom he had ſome money tranſactions, to take a dinner with him at his country-houſe. Soon after dinner the Frenchman was called out upon buſineſs, and his friend left alone with the lady, who to his great ſurpriſe, from being the caſieſt and gayeſt woman imaginable, ſcarcely condeſcended to give an anſwer to any of his queſtions, and at laſt, ſtarting from her chair, and ſurveying him for ſome time with a look of indignation and contempt, ſhe gave him a hearty box on the ear, and ran furiouſly out of the room. While the Engliſhman was ſtroaking his face, and endeavouring to penetrate into this myſterious behaviour, the huſband returned; and finding his friend alone, and enquiring into the reaſon, was told the whole ſtory. What, ſir, ſays he, did ſhe ſtrike you? How did you entertain her? With the common occurrences of the town, anſwered the Engliſhman, nothing more I aſſure you. And did you offer no rudeneſs to her, returned the other? No, upon my honour, replied the friend.

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She has behaved as ſhe ought then, ſaid the Frenchman: for to be alone with a fine woman, and to make no attempt upon her virtue is an affront to her beauty; and ſhe has reſented the indignity as became a woman of ſpirit.

I AM prevented from returning to the ſubject of this paper, by a letter which I have juſt now received by the penny-poſt, and which I ſhall lay before my readers exactly as it was ſent me.

Mr. FITZ-ADAM,

WALKING up St. James's ſtreet the other day, I was ſtopt by a very ſmart young female, who begged my pardon for her boldneſs, and looking very innocently in my face, aſked me if I did not know her. The manner of her accoſting me, and the extreme prettineſs of her figure, made me look at her with attention; and I ſoon recollected that ſhe had been a ſervant girl of my wife's, who had taken her from the country, and after keeping her three years in her ſervice, had diſmiſſed her about two months ago. "What, Nanny, ſaid I, is it you? "I never ſaw any body ſo fine in all my life." O ſir!" "ſays ſhe (with the moſt innocent ſmile imaginable, brideling her head, and curt'ſying down to the ground) "I have been debauched ſince I lived with my miſtreſs." "Have you ſo, Mrs. Nanny, ſaid I! And pray, child, "who is it that has debauched you?" "O ſir! ſays ſhe, "one of the worthieſt gentlemen in the world, and he "has bought me a new negligeè for every day in the "week." The girl preſſed me earneſtly to go and look at her lodgings, which ſhe aſſured me were hard by in Bury ſtreet, and as fine as a ducheſs's; but I declined her offer, knowing that any arguments of mine in favour of virtue and ſtuff-gowns, would avail but little againſt

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